Greening Your Work and Your Commute

Raising awareness and reducing your carbon footprint

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Your Name

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Did you know that by our everyday habits and choices, the average American puts out 22 tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) per year? Experts studying the recent climate history of the earth agree now that global warming is occurring at a precipitous rate, and human activities are the dominant force driving the trend. Our smokestacks, tailpipes, and burning forests emit CO2 and other gasses that add to the planet’s natural greenhouse effect, allowing sunlight in, but preventing some of the resulting heat from radiating back to space. Many climate experts say that without big curbs in greenhouse gas emissions, the 21st century could see temperatures rise 3 to 8 degrees, weather patterns sharply shift, ice sheets shrink, and seas rise several feet. The problem of global warming seems overwhelming, but there is a lot you can do to help. Reducing your personal share of global warming emissions is easier than you think.

The average car in the U.S. releases about 1 lb. of CO2 for every mile driven. Avoiding 20 miles of driving per week eliminates about 1,000 lbs. of CO2 emissions per year.

# SC:\Users\Jennifer\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\S22VTIOS\MP900426636[1].jpgmall Steps to Take at Your Office or School

All of us are capable of making a few small changes at work or in school that can lead to big reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, increase the nation's energy independence, and save money on energy bills. Reduce the environmental impact of your office or school by raising awareness and taking simple steps to reduce energy use.

### Manage office equipment energy use better

[Office equipment and electronics use energy](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductCategory&pcw_code=OEF) even when idle or on stand-by. Activate the [power management features](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductGroup&pgw_code=CO) on your computer and monitor, unplug laptop power cords when not in use, and turn off equipment and lights at the end of the day. Better yet, use a power strip that can be turned off when equipment is not in use.

### Encourage your employer or school to think green

Spearhead environmental awareness in your office by asking your employer to offer benefits that encourage workers to take public transportation or work at home. In schools, students and educators can work together to estimate the school’s greenhouse gas emissions and conceptualize ways to mitigate their school’s climate impact.

### Reduce, reuse, recycle

[Recycle](http://www.epa.gov/msw/recycle.htm) paper, newspapers, beverage containers, electronic equipment, and batteries. You can reduce, reuse, and recycle at the office or in the classroom by using two-sided printing and copying, buying supplies made with recycled content, recycling used printer cartridges. For old electronics, investigate [leasing programs](http://www.epa.gov/ecycling/) to ensure reuse and recycling or donate used equipment to schools or other organizations.

# On the Road

The burning of gasoline and diesel fuel releases CO2 into the atmosphere and contributes to climate change, but these emissions can be reduced by improving your car’s fuel efficiency.

### Buy an efficient vehicle

Before buying a new or used vehicle, research the emissions and fuel economy performance of different vehicles to help you choose the cleanest, most fuel-efficient vehicle that meets your needs (see www.epa.gov).

### Drive smart

To improve fuel economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, go easy on the brakes and gas pedal, avoid hard accelerations, reduce time spent idling, and unload unnecessary items in your trunk to reduce weight. If you have a removable roof rack and you are not using it, take it off to improve your fuel economy by as much as 5 percent.

### Tune your car and check your tires

Keep your car well-maintained and check your tire pressure regularly to keep your car running more efficiently and safely. Underinflation increases tire wear, reduces your fuel economy by up to 3 percent, and leads to higher greenhouse gas emissions and releases of air pollutants.

### Give your car a break

Use public transportation, carpool, run several errands at once, and walk or bike whenever possible to avoid using your car. If possible, telecommute for work, and limit face-to-face meetings that involve travel. Leaving your car at home just two days a week will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 1,590 lbs. per year.

### Use alternative fuels

Find out if you own one of the approximately 5 million Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFV) on the road today. FFVs can be fueled with traditional gasoline or with a fuel blend containing 85% ethanol, which is produced from renewable crops such as corn. Using ethanol as fuel for your car significantly lowers greenhouse gas emissions.

*Sources: www.epa.gov and www.thegreenguide.com.*